[Coronation of the Virgin, and Portrait of A. da Fiesole.]

ESSAYS ON THE LIVES OF REMARKABLE PAINTERS.—No. XIII.

[Continued from page 274.]

Angelico da Fiesole.

Contemporary with Fra Filippo, or rather earlier in point of date, lived another painter-monk, presenting in his life and character the strongest possible contrast to the former—a man who, as Vasari tells us, might have lived a very agreeable life in the world, had he not, impelled by a sincere and fervent spirit of devotion, retired from it at the age of twenty to bury himself within the walls of a cloister; a man, with whom the practice of a beautiful art was thenceforth a hymn of praise, and every creation of his pencil an act of piety and charity, and who, in seeking only the glory of God, earned an immortal glory among men. This was Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole, whose name, before he entered the convent, was Guido Petri de Mugello.* He has since obtained, from the holiness of his life, the title of *Il Beato*, "the Blessed," by which he is often mentioned in Italian histories of art. He was born in 1387, at Fiesole, a beautiful town situated on a hill overlooking Florence; and in 1407, being then twenty, and already skilled in the art of painting, particularly miniature illuminations, he entered the Dominican convent of St. Mark at Florence, and took the habit of the order

* Notes to the last Florence edition of Vasari, p. 303.

It is not known exactly under whom he studied, but he is said to have been taught by Starnina, the best colourist of that time. The rest of his long life of seventy years presents only one unbroken tranquil stream of placid contentment and pious labours. Except on one occasion, when called to Rome by Pope Nicholas V. to paint in the Vatican, he never left his convent, and then only yielded to the express command of the pontiff. While he was at Rome, the Archbishopric of Florence became vacant, and the pope, struck by the virtue and learning of Angelico, and the simplicity and sanctity of his life, offered to install him in that dignity, one of the greatest in the power of the papal see to bestow. Angelico refused it from excess of modesty, pointing out at the same time to the notice of the pope a brother of his convent as much more worthy of the honour, and by his active talents more fitted for the office. The pope listened to his recommendation; Frate Antonino was raised to the see, and became celebrated as the best Archbishop of Florence that had been known for two centuries. Meantime Angelico pursued his vocation in the still precincts of his quiet monastery, and being as assiduous as he was devout, he painted a great number of pictures, some in distemper and on a small scale, to which he gave all the delicacy and finish of miniature; and in the churches of Florence many large frescoes with numerous figures nearly life size, as full of grandeur as of beauty. He painted only sacred subjects, and never for money. Those who wished for any work of his hand were obliged to apply to the prior of the convent, from whom Angelico received with humility the order or the permission to execute it, and thus the brotherhood was at once enriched by his talent and edified by his virtue. To Angelico the art of painting a picture devoted to religious purposes was an act of religion, for which he prepared himself by fasting and prayer, imploring on bended knees the benediction of heaven on his work: he then, under the impression that he had obtained the blessing he sought, and glowing with what might truly be called inspiration, took up his pencil, and mingling with his earnest and pious humility a singular species of self-uplifted enthusiasm, he could never be persuaded to alter his first draught or composition, believing that which he had done was according to the will of God, and could not be changed for the better by any after-thought of his own or suggestion from others. All the works left by Angelico are in harmony with this gentle, devout, enthusiastic spirit. They are not remarkable for the usual merits of the Florentine school: they are not addressed to the taste of connoisseurs, but to the faith of worshippers. Correct drawing of the human figure could not be expected from one who regarded the exhibition of the undraped form as a sin; in the learned distribution of light and shade, in the careful imitation of nature in the details, and in variety of expression, many of his contemporaries excelled him; but none approached him in that poetical and religious fervour which he threw into his heads of saints and Madonnas. Power is not the characteristic of Angelico; wherever he has had to express energy of action, or bad or angry passions, he has generally failed. In his pictures of the Crucifixion, and the Stoning of St. Stephen, the executioners and the rabble are feeble and often ill-drawn, and his fallen angels and devils are anything but devilish; while, on the other hand, the pathos of suffering, of pity, of divine resignation—the expression of extatic faith and hope, or serene contemplation, have never been placed before us as in his pictures. In the heads of his young angels, in the purity and beatitude of his female saints, he has never been excelled—not even by Raphael.

The principal works of Angelico are the frescoes in the church of his own convent of St. Mark at Florence, in the church of Santa Maria Novella, and at Rome in the chapel of Nicholas V., in the Vatican. His small easel pictures are numerous, and to be found in most of the foreign collections, though unhappily the writer can point out none that are accessible in England. There is one in the Louvre, of surpassing beauty, the upper part of which is represented in the wood-cut at the head of this essay. The subject has already been alluded to (No. 694, p. 26) as a favourite one with the early painters, the Coronation of the Virgin Mary by her son the Redeemer, in the presence of saints and angels. It represents a throne under a rich Gothic canopy, to which there is an ascent by nine steps; on the highest kneels the Virgin, veiled, her hands crossed on her bosom. She is clothed in a red tunic, a blue robe over it, and a royal mantle with a rich border flowing down behind. The features are most delicately lovely, and the expression of the face full of humility and adoration. Christ, seated on the throne, bends forward, and is in the act of placing the crown on her head; on each side are twelve angels, who are playing a heavenly concert with guitars, tambourines, trumpets, viols, and other musical instruments; lower than these, on each side, are forty holy personages of the Old and New Testament; and at the foot of the throne kneel several saints, male and female, among them St. Catherine, St. Agnes, and St. Cecilia, crowned with flowers. Beneath the principal picture there is a row of seven small ones, forming a border, and representing various incidents in the life of St. Dominic. The whole measures about seven and a half feet high by six feet in width. It is painted in distemper; the glories round the heads of the sacred personages are in gold; the colours are the most delicate and vivid imaginable; and the ample draperies have the long folds which recall the school of Giotto; the gaiety and harmony of the tints, the expression of the various heads, the divine rapture of the angels with their air of immortal youth, and the devout reverence of the other personages, the unspeakable serenity and beauty of the whole composition, render this picture worthy of the celebrity it has enjoyed for more than four centuries. It was painted by Frate Angelico for the church of St. Dominic at Fiesole, where it remained till the beginning of the present century. How obtained it does not appear, but it was purchased by the French government in 1812, and exhibited for the first time in the long gallery of the Louvre in 1815; it is now placed in the gallery of drawings at the upper end. A very good set of outlines were engraved and published at Paris, with explanatory notes by A. W. Schlegel; and to those who have no opportunity of seeing the original, these would convey some faint idea of the composition, and of the exquisite and benign beauty of the angelic heads.

Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole died at Rome, in 1455, and is buried there in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva.

It is a curious circumstance that the key of the chapel of Pope Nicholas V., in which Angelico painted some of his most beautiful frescoes, was for two centuries lost, and few persons were aware of their existence, fewer still set any value on them. In 1769 those who wished to see them were obliged to enter by a window.

LAKES.

LAKES are in the land what islands are in the sea; they are surrounded on all sides by land, as islands are by water. They are sheets of water of greater or less extent, and differ from lagoons in their origin, and from tanks and reservoirs by their being naturally

formed, whereas the latter are the works of man. From ponds and pools it is not so easy to distinguish them, it being difficult to draw the line between a large pond and a small lake. The feature by which, perhaps, they would be best distinguished is this, that a lake is fed by streams either flowing at the surface of the soil or subterraneous; while a pond, though large, is only the accumulation of rain-water in some hollow. Thus ponds are usually dried up in hot weather, while true lakes are only temporarily diminished by heat.

Lakes have sometimes been divided into fresh-water lakes and salt-water lakes; though here again it is not easy to draw the line between the two, as from the freshest to the most salt the degrees of saltness are very various.

The principal difference in lakes is this: some have no apparent affluents nor outlet, others have affluents without any visible outlet; some have an outlet without any visible affluents, and others again have both affluents and an outlet.

Lakes without apparent affluents or outlets are comparatively small, and yet they are, relatively speaking, more permanent than larger lakes, because, being fed chiefly by subterraneous springs, they are not liable to be filled by those deposits of earth and sand which are the main cause of the rapid desiccation of such lakes as receive the troubled waters of torrents and rivers. If we follow the usual custom, and call all natural sheets of water lakes, then there are many lakes without affluents or outlet. Thus they are very numerous to the northward of the Caspian and in the plains which extend between the Ural Mountains and the Irtish, as also in the great steppe of Baraba, between the Irtish and the Ob. But in truth the greater part of these are more properly ponds, formed of the accumulated waters from rain and melted snow. The largest of them are not more than ten or twelve miles in circumference and six or seven feet deep; indeed, many of them are quite dried up towards the end of summer. Some are salt, and yield considerable profit. Their saltness is not easily accounted for; the more particularly as among and close to those that are salt there are many whose waters are quite fresh. The opinions of naturalists on the subject of salt lakes are very various, and no satisfactory theory has, perhaps, yet been offered. Small lakes of the kind of which we have been speaking, that is to say, such as have neither affluents nor outlet, sometimes occur in hollows resembling the craters of extinct volcanoes. We say resembling, because, although Dolomieu, Spallanzani, and others maintain the existence of lakes in such craters, M. Desmarest, upon apparently very good reasons, absolutely denies the possibility of lakes existing in the craters of extinct volcanoes. The celebrated Lake of Averno is, according to Ferber and Breislak, situated in an antient crater.

Of lakes which receive affluents without having any visible outlet, the largest is the Caspian. The Aral and the Dead Sea, or Lake Asphaltites, are also examples of this kind of lake, which is very common in Asia. Some of them are of vast extent; such, for instance, is the lake Terkiri in Tibet, twenty-seven leagues long and nine leagues wide, and the lake Hoho-nor, or Koko-nor, in the same country, whose surface is two hundred and forty square leagues. It was at one time thought that the saltness of certain lakes was due to the circumstance of their receiving the saline impurities of their affluents, which impurities could not escape for want of an outlet: but, on the one hand, the Durrah in Segistan, which receives the Helmund and has no outlet, is perfectly fresh; and, on the other, there are many salt lakes which have no affluents: hence the saltness of lakes must have some other cause. The question has sometimes been asked, what becomes of the excess of water brought into lakes having no outlet? Halley thought evaporation was all-sufficient to carry it off, and his opinion is highly plausible. If, however, it shall be found, by actual experiment, that a greater quantity of water is brought into a lake, without apparent issue, than can be carried off by evaporation, the natural conclusion will be that the surplus is lost by infiltration or subaqueous drainage. Several of these lakes have formerly had outlets, but water has ceased to flow from them, because the lakes have sunk in consequence of receiving now a much smaller quantity of water than formerly. There are many lakes in Europe at the present day whose outlets are diminishing; such, among others, are the lakes Balaton and Neusiedel in Hungary. The extent of surface of the former is very great compared with the quantity of water which it receives, so that the evaporation is rapidly diminishing the lake, and the river Schio, which used to carry off its superabundant waters and pour them into the Danube, is now nothing more than a slip of bog; and as for the lake Neusiedel, it appears formerly to have communicated with the Danube by the Raab, into which it emptied its waters, and with which it has now no other communication than by a swamp. The Aral also, it is generally believed, once communicated with the Caspian.

Those lakes which have an outlet without any apparent affluent are fed by subaqueous springs, which, bursting out in a hollow, must fill it up before the waters can flow off in a stream. These lakes are generally situated at considerable elevations above the level of the sea. Thus there is one on Monte Rotondo in Corsica, at an elevation of 9069 feet. From lakes of this kind some of the largest rivers take their rise; the Volga, for instance, springs from such a lake in the government of Tver in Russia.

Lakes which receive one or more tributary streams, and have a visible outlet for their superabundant waters, are the most common and the largest; such are the lakes of Switzerland and of the north of Italy, the lakes Ladoga, Onega, Peipus, and Ilmen in Russia; the Saïma, in Finland; the Wener, in Sweden; the Enara, in Lapland, &c. In Asia there are the Nor-Zaïssan and the Baïkal, &c. In North America, Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario are examples of this kind of lake; each of them receives several affluents; and the grand outlet of the whole is the river St. Lawrence.

Lakes owe their origin to different circumstances: some from the sinking of the soil by the falling in of subterraneous caverns; such is the supposed origin of the Baïkal: others are caused by earthquakes; such a lake was formed in the province of Quito in 1797: some by the fall of mountains, as the Oschenen-see in the canton of Berne; or by lava currents damming up the stream, as the lakes Aidat and Cassiere in Auvergne, in France. Many are supposed to be the remains of the universal ocean which once covered the earth, and their waters, originally salt, have become fresh from their receiving constant supplies of fresh water while the salt was continually let off by their outlets.

Almost all lakes are in progress of diminution, although this is not everywhere apparent. The detrital matter brought in by their affluents is imperceptibly filling up their beds; and if regular observations were made, many provinces which owe much of their prosperity to their lakes would find the time fast approaching when these pieces of water will become mere pestilential marshes.

Certain lakes exhibit remarkable phenomena: thus some have floating islands in them, as is the case with

a small lake near St. Omer. The lake Gerdau, in Prussia, has a floating island, on which a hundred head of cattle may be seen pasturing. In the lake Kolk, in Osnabrück, there is a floating island, on which fine elms are growing. Some of these floating islands sink and rise again; thus in the lake Rålang in Smoland, a province of Sweden, there is a floating island which appeared and disappeared ten successive times between the years 1696 and 1766. Other floating islands are found in East Gothland and many other places. Some subterranean lakes are supposed to have become so by the formation and subsequent fixing of floating islands, which successively uniting have finished by forming a solid crust over the water.

Some lakes have a double bottom, which, rising and sinking alternately, changes the apparent depth of the lake: there is a lake of this kind at Jemtia in Sweden.

Some lakes are said to have no bottom; but this is an impossibility: the fact is, that the sound does not reach the bottom, either for want of sufficient weight of lead or length of line, or else it is carried away by under-currents.

In Poland there exists a lake said to render brown the skin of those who bathe in it. Certain mineral waters impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen are well known to change from white to brown the skins of those persons who have been under a course of metallic medicines, or who use metallic cosmetics, and some such circumstance may be the case with the lake in question.

Some lakes are intermittent: the most remarkable of this kind are those of Cirknitz in Illyria and Kauten in Prussia. They are supposed to be occasioned by a play of natural siphons, upon the same principle as intermittent fountains.

The Lake of Geneva is subject to a subaqueous wind, called the *Vaudaise*, which, rising to the surface, produces an agitation of the water which is sometimes dangerous to the navigation of the lake. Near Boleslaw in Bohemia there is a lake of unknown depth, from the bottom of which there rise, in winter, such violent puffs of wind, that they are said to send up into the air masses of ice of several hundred pounds weight. The sudden escape of gases formed in the bowels of the earth, and perhaps the air forcibly driven out from caverns by the water rushing into and filling them up, may be among the causes of this remarkable phenomenon.

The *Seiches* are a phenomenon which has hitherto been observed only in the Lake of Geneva and some other of the Swiss and Italian lakes, though it is probably common to many others. It consists in an occasional undulation of the water, something like a tide wave, which rises occasionally to the height of five feet. Its cause is not exactly known, though it is most probably due to a local and temporary change of atmospheric pressure. Water-spouts are a phenomenon sometimes seen on lakes as on the sea; they have been observed on the lakes of Zürich and Geneva.

Certain lakes seem to be placed in the immediate neighbourhood of centres or foci of electrical attraction; thus in the lake Huron there is a bay over which electrical clouds are perpetually hovering. It is affirmed that no person has ever traversed it without hearing thunder. The proximity of this lake to the American magnetic pole, that is, to the spot where the magnetic intensity is greatest, not where the dip is greatest, may perhaps have some influence in producing so remarkable a phenomenon.

Near Beja in Portugal there is a lake which is said to announce the approach of a storm by a tremendous rumbling. In Siberia also, near the little river Orcibat, which flows into the Abakan, there is, according to Pallas, a lake called the Roaring Lake, from the dreadful noise it makes, and which announces internal revolutions similar to that which occasioned the rupture of the dykes of the Lake Gousinoï in Douaria.

Some lakes have been observed to possess a petrifying or an incrusting property. The latter is merely a deposition of carbonate of lime. This, being dissolved by an excess of acid in the waters of certain springs, is precipitated whenever the waters of these sources coming into the lakes are exposed to the air and lose their excess of acid.

There is an interesting phenomenon presented by the Lake of Zürich, called the flowering of the lake. When this takes place the surface of the water is seen covered with a yellow scum or froth, which upon examination is found to be a very minute vegetation.

There are various other phenomena presented by lakes, but the most singular of them all perhaps is the attractive force of the mud at the bottom of some lakes, which is such that boats can hardly make their way through the water. The Lake Rose and one or two more in Canada are of this kind. Mackenzie describes the fact in these words:—"At the portage or carrying-place of Martres, on Rose Lake, the water is only three or four feet deep, and the bottom is muddy. I have often plunged into it a pole twelve feet long, with as much ease as if I merely plunged it into the water. Nevertheless this mud has a sort of magical effect upon the boats, which is such that the paddles can with difficulty urge them on. This effect is not perceptible on the south side of the lake, where the water is deep, but is more and more sensible as you approach the opposite shore. I have been assured that loaded boats have often been in danger of sinking, and could only be extricated by being towed by lighter boats. As for myself, I have never been in danger of foundering, but I have several times had great difficulty in passing this spot with six stout rowers, whose utmost efforts could scarcely overcome the attraction of the mud. A similar phenomenon is observed on the lake Saginaga, whose bottom attracts the boats with such force that it is only with the greatest difficulty that a loaded boat can be made to advance; fortunately the spot is only about four hundred yards over." Captain Back has confirmed the above by his late observations.

Lakes differ very much in temperature, transparency, and in the colour of their waters. Lakes fed by the water of melted snows in summer are generally much colder than would be thought conformable with the season; but the difference is principally in the lower waters, which, being cold, remain at the bottom by reason of their greater density. Some lakes never freeze, which is owing to their great depth. This is the case with Loch Ness in Scotland, which is eight hundred and ten feet deep in the deepest part. Lakes are not subject to tides; at least the amount of tide, so far as observation goes, seems not to be ascertained.

The remarkable transparency of certain lakes is truly astonishing: thus the waters of Lake Superior are so pellucid, that, according to Mr. Heriot, the fish and rocks may be seen at a depth incredible to persons who have never visited these regions. The density of the medium on which the vessel moves appears scarcely to exceed that of the atmosphere, and the traveller becomes impressed with awe at the novelty of his situation. Elliot, in his 'Letters from the North of Europe,' says—"Nothing appears more singular to a foreigner than the transparency of the waters of the Norwegian lakes. At the depth of one hundred or one hundred and twenty feet, the surface of the ground beneath is perfectly visible; sometimes it may be seen wholly covered with shells, sometimes only sprinkled with them; now a submarine forest presents itself to view, and now a subaqueous mountain:" and Sir A. de

Capell Brooke observed of the same lakes—"When a boat passes over a subaqueous mountain of a certain height, the visual illusion is so perfect, that one who has gradually, in tranquil progress over the surface, ascended wondering the rugged steep, shrinks back with horror as he crosses the vortex, under an impression that he is falling headlong down the precipice." In the lake Wetter, in Sweden, it is said a farthing may be seen at the depth of twenty fathoms.

With regard to the colour of lakes, it may be observed that it is sometimes very difficult to account for the tints of large masses of water. The colour of the bottom, the depth, the shadows and reflected colours of surrounding bodies, subaqueous vegetation, springs, and many other circumstances affect the colour of lakes.

Lakes perform a very important function in the economy of the earth. Rain does not always fall; and were it not for lakes, both visible and subterranean, those great natural reservoirs, the greater number of rivers would be dried up in summer, and canals could not have a constant supply of water. The freshness and humidity which these sheets of water occasion by their evaporation are also eminently favourable to the vegetation in their environs. Many lakes are of sufficient extent to be navigated, and thus facilitate commerce and industry. The fisheries of some are very valuable, and others, by the salt obtained from them, are a mine of wealth. Finally, they most agreeably diversify the surface of the earth by the various appearances which they present of the beautiful and the sublime.—*From the Penny Cyclopædia.*

[Penshurst Castle.]

A, Elizabeth Gallery; B, Barrack Room; C, Prison; D, Saccharissa's Apartments; E, Leicester's Bell.

RAMBLES FROM RAILWAYS.

PENSHURST (*concluded*).

AMONG the pictures of Queen Elizabeth's drawing-room, not before noticed, two of Titian's demand especial attention—a Venus Attired, and a Venus Sleeping; both standing out from everything else in the place by the warmth and luxuriance of their colouring. The portraits generally also will well repay examination, as may be supposed, when we mark how often the names of Lely and Vandyke appear inscribed beneath. One of the last-named artist's portraits represents Waller's successful rival, the husband of Saccharissa, Robert Spencer, first Earl of Sunderland; and if the truth be told, however much our sympathies may be apt to incline us to wish the lady had married the poet, it is very certain she married a much nobler person. Waller's political conduct altogether exhibits so little consistency or strength of principle, that we can easily suppose his previous intimacy with Lady Dorothy Sidney had caused her to see and appreciate his character too truly, rather than, as is apparently often presumed, to make her indifferent to it. The nobleman chosen by her as her future partner gave every promise of the future excellencies of his character in those qualities of which Waller was most deficient. At the early age of twenty-two, on the breaking out of the civil war, he joined the royal standard at Nottingham, a proceeding which, with his views, was perhaps on the whole an error, but the error was but an excess of honourable aspirations. In a letter written about this time to his young bride, he says, "How much I am unsatisfied with the proceedings here I have at large expressed in several letters. Neither is there wanting daily handsome occasions to retire, were it not for grinning honour. For let occasion be never so

handsome, unless a man were resolved to fight on the parliament side, which, for my part, I had rather be hanged, it will be said without doubt that a man is afraid to fight. If there could be an expedient found to salve the punctilio of honour, I would not continue here an hour." And although he did fight in the royal cause, and most gallantly, in the first engagement that took place between the hostile armies, at Edgehill, in 1642, yet he would accept no commission; and when he fell, only a year later, in the battle of Newbury, he was still a volunteer; though in the interim he had been raised by Charles to the earldom of Sunderland. He left one son by his wife, the afterwards famous and favourite minister of Charles II., James II., and William III.

We now advance towards the Tapestry-room, so called from two immense productions of the far-famed looms of Gobelins, that decorate two of its sides. The subjects are the Triumph of Ceres, and Eolus unbarring the Winds. The drawing of the figures, the colour, and general harmony of expression are most masterly, and make one fancy the work must be attributed to the period when Le Brun was director in chief of the great French manufactories. Penshurst has in this apartment another of those portraits of Edward VI., by Holbein, which are scattered so profusely among our civic halls and country-mansions, and form so many indications of the popularity of both king and painter at the time. Here also is one of Lely's most beautifully executed pictures, a reclining full-length nude figure of Nell Gwynn; another small full-length of a lady, a charming picture by N. Netscher, and some alabaster antiques from Herculaneum. A picture containing the portraits of two ladies derives its chief interest from the persons represented; these are Lady Dorothy Percy, the mother of Algernon Sidney (in whose beautiful but somewhat masculine features much of the patriot's unflinching resolution may be traced), and Lady Lucy Percy, the well-known Countess of Carlisle, whom Miss Aikin, in her 'Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I.,' describes as "a distinguished beauty, wit, and political intriguer; nor is her memory free from the suspicion, at least, of gallantry; no court lady of her time was equally celebrated or conspicuous. She was flattered in French by Voiture, and in her native tongue by almost all the contemporary wits and poets, and more especially by Waller in verse, and in prose by that singular and mysterious person Sir Toby Matthew, who composed an elaborate character of her, which is sufficiently hyperbolical to wear some appearance of irony, especially in the eulogium which he seems to bestow upon that arrogant scorn with which it was her practice to treat persons of every rank."

A little Picture-closet is attached to the Tapestry-room, containing, among other noticeable works, a fine landscape, by some unknown painter; Titian's Mistress, by himself; a Madonna and Sleeping Child, by Guido; a fine Christ Crowned, and a Head of a Saint, by Giorgione, at once the originator and perfecter of the glowing pictorial harmonies that characterise the Venetian school, and who yet lived but to the age of thirty-four. But to visitors of a certain description there is an object of greater interest than all these paintings put together, that is a portion of the shaving-glass of Sir Philip Sidney, with a strong magnifying-power. Returning to the Tapestry-room, we pass by another door into the Gallery, which is of great length, of sufficient breadth and height, and tolerably well-lighted. Here many valuable works adorn the walls, such as a curious Old Man's Face, by Rembrandt; Bacchanals, by N. Poussin; Telemachus in the Island of Calypso, by Vandyke; a great picture of Apollo and the Muses, by Lely; a large reclining Venus, by Titian; with a Venus Attired, by Lely, from Guido. But perhaps the most remarkable pictures here also are those connected with the memorable personages of the mansion, as the two Sidneys, Sir Philip and his brother Robert, whilst youths, and Saccharissa before and after her marriage. In neither of the last-named portraits, one of which is by Vandyke and the other by Hoskins, do we perceive the personal beauty we are apt to look for in poetical heroines, and which we are so often disappointed in finding, not simply from the nonsensical cause so often talked about, the illusions of the poet's fancy, as from the circumstance that poets see in such faces finer beauties of expression than are visible to ordinary eyes, and which, if understood by the painter's kindred vision, are too subtle to be expressed by his hand on the canvas. The picture of the brothers, by Mark Gerrard, is very curious; it is tall and narrow in shape, representing the youths with their arms linked affectionately together. Their likeness to each other is striking. Philip's taller stature reveals the elder brother, as does also his manly firm-looking position, with the right arm a-kimbo, and the hand upon his waist, reminding us of a taper lady's of the present day, for it contrasts with the swelling drapery about the hips. There is something touchingly beautiful in the nestling sense of security which seems to have impelled the younger brother Robert to his side, and from whence he now looks abroad on the world. It was to this son that Sir Henry Sidney, the father, wrote the letter in which he thus spoke of the other: "Follow the advice of your most loving brother, who in loving you is comparable with me, *or exceedeth me*. Imitate his virtues, exercises, studies, and actions. He is a rare ornament of his age; the very formula that all well-disposed young gentlemen of the court do form also their manners and life by. In truth, I speak it without flattery of him or myself, he hath the most virtues that I ever found in any man." Next to the being the son thus spoken of, who would not wish to be the father who thus could speak? In the centre of the gallery, on the left hand as we go down it from the door, is a little recess, hung round with pictures, and having in the centre a small table with the arms of the family richly emblazoned, exhibiting the whole of its quarterings (or arms of other families with which it has been connected by marriage), ninety-five in number, and comprising in rank the most distinguished houses of England. We see here, for instance, the arms of the Warwicks, Leicesters, Essexes, Northumberlands, Pembrokes, Carlisles, Burleighs, Sutherlands, Rutlands, Strangfords, and Sunderlands. We may here notice the family connexion with a greater than any of these; Percy Bysshe Shelley was a nephew of the present Sir John Sidney, and the cousin of Sir John's son, Lord de l'Isle, the present possessor of Penshurst. Of the pictures in the recess there are two of great interest from their age, small works by Simon Mercati, 1340, from the dispersed collection of Charles I., and several for their intrinsic excellence: we may particularise a Madonna, by Leonardo da Vinci; a striking portrait by Holbein; a splendid little picture of a Holy Family, by Annibale Carracci; and the Flood, by N. Poussin, which, however, unfortunately hangs high and in a bad light.

Besides the pictures, of which the slight foregoing notices can give but a very inadequate idea, Penshurst is rich in wealth of other kinds, such as curiosities, family papers, and memorials. Among the former may be classed the curious and rich-looking cabinet, given by James I. to the Earl of Leicester, the Robert Sidney before mentioned: the front is inlaid with small paintings, and have in different parts miniature gilded busts. The locks of hair that have been so carefully

preserved are more than curiosities, when we know that it was from the head of the poet or the patriot that they were cut. In looking upon these almost sacred relics of Philip and Algernon Sidney, in the very prime of their manhood, when each in his time and path was fulfilling the lofty destiny marked out for him, we are forcibly reminded of the beautiful lines by Leigh Hunt—

> "There seems a love in hair, though it be dead:
> It is the gentlest, yet the strongest thread
> Of our frail plant,—a blossom from the tree,
> Surviving the proud trunk; as if it said,
> Patience and Gentleness in Power. In me
> Behold affectionate eternity."

As a proof of the genuineness of the respective portraits, it is not unworthy of observation that the colour of the hair in them agrees with the colour of the actual locks preserved. Of the family papers it may be said that we do not yet know their full value, although so much use has been made of them. Here are letters, journals, inventories, household-books, with miscellanies of the most various kinds, the writers in many cases being the more distinguished members of the family, from the greatest downwards. The household-books, two in number, were those of Algernon Sidney's father; and present us, among the general detail of the economy of the mansion, with notices of Algernon's "room," and the puddings, birds, mutton, and other viands there provided for him. The expenses of the family at that period were truly enormous: one week, in 1625, there was paid in the kitchen, for flesh, fish, poultry, butter, eggs, groceries, 29*l.* 17*s.* 10*d.*; pantry and cellar, in bread, beer, sack, claret, &c. 14*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*; laundry, soap and starch, 1*s.* 11*d.*; stables, for hay and oats, 1*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.*; fuel, in charcoal and billets, 3*l.* 9*s.* 0*d.*; in all about 50*l.* for the week, or at the rate of 2500*l.* a year: no wonder the old English hospitality remains still a by-word among us, though the hospitality itself has disappeared.

ECONOMICAL USES OF THE OAK.

[Continued from page 276.]

THERE are some very curious circumstances connected with the excrescences or diseases of the British Oak; but we will speak of those when treating of the gall-nut of the foreign oak: and will now proceed to notice the useful properties of the

Turkey Oak. The wood and bark of this tree are considered to bear a near resemblance to those of the British oak; but as this variety has been known in this country only about a century, very few specimens have attained a sufficient size to be cut down for timber, and but little experience has hence been obtained. Some few years ago Mr. Atkinson, wishing to test the quality of the timber, cut down two trees at East Hampstead, in Berkshire, a seat belonging to the Marquess of Downshire, and had the wood made into doors for the principal rooms of the mansion. In speaking of this wood, Mr. Atkinson says, "It is much finer in the grain than that of our British Oak, or foreign wainscot; it takes a better polish, and is more beautiful than any other oak that I have ever seen. From only a single specimen, which I had broken, it was not so strong as our native oak, but equal in toughness; but my specimen being rather cross-grained, it was not a correct experiment, and I suspect it is equal in strength to our oak. For all ornamental purposes where the wood has to be polished, it is superior, and must be a profitable tree to plant, as it grows much quicker than our common oaks." Mr. Loudon says, that on inquiring what was the opinion held at East Hampstead, at a later period, respecting the qualities of the Turkey oak, he was informed that the wood is not much inferior to that of the English oak if kept quite in the dry; but that it will not stand in water, or in situations where it is alternately wet and dry, so well as that species; that if the tree is allowed to grow to the ordinary age at which the British oak is felled, the wood is very apt to get shaky at the heart; and that Turkey oaks require to be felled as soon as any dead twigs are seen in the topmost boughs, or in about sixty or eighty years after planting. The Turkey oaks grown in the south of France are much employed in the southern ports of that country for ship-building; and those grown on the southern shores of the Black Sea are similarly used at Constantinople.

The *Valonia-Oak*, nearly allied to the one just named, and growing in the Archipelago, yields the *valonia* of commerce. This valonia consists of the acorns and cups, and is annually brought to Europe, where it is in great demand for tanning, being said to contain more "tannin" in a given bulk of substance than any other vegetable. There are 150,000 cwts. imported in a year, at from 12*l.* to 15*l.* per ton.

American Oaks. There are several varieties of oak found in America, which belong to that continent rather than to Europe. One of these, the American *White* Oak, Michaux describes as being the kind of oak most employed both for ship-building and for house-building, in America; and he adds that in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and nearly all the towns in the middle states, the frame-work of all the well-built houses, whether of wood or brick, is formed of the timber of this tree. It is seldom, however, used for the floors, or outer covering of wooden houses, from its liability to warp and split. The wood of the younger trees is very elastic, and is capable of such minute subdivision, that it is used for many of the purposes of the willow or the bamboo, or even whalebone; such as basket-making, carpet-brooms, seats and backs for chairs, the rims of sieves, the bottoms of riddles, and carters' whips. The wood is also used for milk-pails, the handles of axes, and other rural purposes. It furnishes an immense supply of staves for wine-casks, which are exported to Madeira, Teneriffe, and other wine-countries. The bark is employed for tanning; and the acorns are eaten by the American Indians.

The other varieties of American oak produce timber less known than the above. There is one, however, called the *Post Oak*, of which Michaux says;—"Growing in a less humid soil, its timber is less elastic, but finer grained, stronger, and more durable, than that of the White Oak: hence it is preferred, in America, for posts; and is used with advantage by wheelwrights and coopers. In ship-building, it is employed principally for the knees, as it seldom produces planks large enough for the sides." The remaining American kinds are each noticeable for some one or other quality which distnguishes them from the rest. Thus, the *Chestnut* oak, from its property of splitting in a straight line, and of dividing into fine shreds, is used by the negroes for making baskets and brooms; while another kind, distinguished for the opposite quality of twisted and crooked branches and limbs, produces pieces of timber admirably adapted for the knees of ships, and yields bark, extensively employed at New York for tanning. The wood of the *red* oak is used for sugar-casks and similar purposes; it yields a large quantity of the tanning principle; and its acorns are eaten voraciously by wild animals, and also by the cows, horses, and swine, that are allowed to range in the woods after the herbage has perished.

The *Dyer's Oak*, or Quercitron Oak, is a kind which has acquired that name from the value of the bark as a dye material. In respect to its timber, it is very much

esteemed in America for strength and durability, though the wood is porous and cross-grained. In Philadelphia it is employed in building; and in most parts of the northern states it is used as a substitute for the white oak, whenever that tree is scarce; while a large proportion of what are called the "best red oak staves," which are used in Canada and the West Indies to form casks for flour, salted provisions, and molasses, are made of the wood of this tree. The bark is extensively used in tanning; for which it is well adapted, as it is produced abundantly and is rich in tannin.

The substance called quercitron is, however, the product for which this variety of the oak is most valued. Dr. Bancroft first discovered and applied the dyeing properties of the quercitron, and he obtained a patent for his invention in 1775; but the American War breaking out soon afterwards, he reaped little profit from his discovery, though it has been of great advantage to the arts and manufactures of both England and America. The epidermis, or exterior blackish coat of the bark, affords a yellow colouring matter, which however is less pure, and more inclined to a brownish hue, than that of the other coats. In preparing the dye-material this outer part is first removed, and the remaining cellular and cortical parts are ground by mill-stones, which separate them partly into a light fine powder, and partly into stringy filaments or fibres. The powder yields more quercitron than the fibres, but both are mingled together preparatory to its extraction. The colouring matter is readily extracted from the powder and fibres by the action of warm water. The quality of the drug as a yellow-dye was slightly noticed in our No. 685.

The *Holm* or *Common Evergreen Oak*, or *Ilex*, is a large shrub, or small tree, brought originally from the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, but now extensively cultivated in England. It was well known to the ancients. Pliny mentions some holm oaks in existence when he wrote, which, according to his statement, must have then been, at the lowest computation, fourteen or fifteen centuries old. One tree, he says, grew in the Vatican, and was older than Rome itself: it had brazen letters, in the ancient Etruscan characters, fixed upon its trunk; from which it would appear, that before the city was founded, or even the Roman name was known, this oak was a sacred tree.

Cato and Columella recommended the leaves of the ilex, or holm oak, as a litter for sheepcotes, when straw could not easily be procured; and Pliny states that the Romans sometimes made their civic crowns of it. This tree is very much known in the south of Europe, and is frequently alluded to both by the ancient and modern poets of those countries. Thus Garcilasso has some lines which indicate the esteem in which the fruit of this tree seems to be held:—

> "Hast thou forgotten, too,
> Childhood's sweet sports, whence first my passion grew;
> When from the bow'ry ilex I shook down
> Its autumn fruit, which on the crag's high crown
> We tasted, sitting chattering side by side?
> Who climbed trees swinging o'er the hoarse deep tide,
> And pour'd into thy lap, or at thy feet,
> Their kernel'd nuts, the sweetest of the sweet?"

The heart-wood of the ilex is of a brown colour, very close-grained, heavy, and very hard; so much so, indeed, that Parkinson says "it is not easie for an axe, but for a saw, to cut it." It takes a fine polish, but twists and splits a great deal in drying. It is of great duration, and also of considerable flexibility; for which reason, in Languedoc, helves of hatchets and other instruments are made of it, and are found to preserve their flexibility even when dry. Du Hamel, when speaking of the qualities of this oak, observes that the great weight of the wood ought not to be considered a defect, even in the construction of vessels; because, if it is employed in the bottoms, it will serve instead of ballast; and, if it is employed in the upper parts, it may be used of small dimensions, as it is much stronger than common oak. He recommends using it in preference to every other species of oak, wherever it can be obtained of sufficient size; more especially in cases where it has to resist friction. Evelyn says the wood of the ilex is serviceable for many purposes; particularly for handles to tools, mallet-heads, chairs, axle-trees, wedges, beetles, and palisadoes in fortification. The ilex wood has been strongly recommended as knee-timber for ships. A recent traveller in Spain, Captain S. E. Cook, states that the ilex produces the best timber in the southern and middle regions of the Peninsula. "It is," he adds, "now unfortunately the only fire-wood in most parts of Castile, which is hourly diminishing the scanty stock that yet remains. The mode of cutting increases the evil; the practice of the peasantry being almost invariably to level the whole tract which they attack."

The same writer describes another species of oak, growing also in Spain, of which the acorns, as a fruit, are considered quite equal to the chestnut. "To give this sweetness," he says, "they must be kept; as, at first, they have a considerable taste of the tannin, like those of the other species, which disappears in a few days, and accounts for the scepticism of some writers, who assert that both sweet and bitter are the produce of the same tree, and that their sweetness is no character. These are the edible acorns of the ancients, which they believed fattened the tunny-fish on their passage from the ocean to the Mediterranean; a fable only proving that the acorns grew on the delicious shores and rocks of Andalusia, which unhappily is no longer the case. Remains of them may however still be traced in the west; and they fattened the swine which produced the celebrated salted meats of Malaga and that vicinity. These are the 'bellotas,' which Teresa, the wife of Sancho Panza, gathered herself in La Mancha, where they grew in the greatest perfection, and sent to the duchess, wishing, instead of their being only the best of their kind, they were the size of ostrich eggs. I have frequently seen them produced by individuals, and offered to the company, as *bon-bons*, with a sort of apology for their small intrinsic value, from their size and flavour." These choice acorns are about an inch and a half in length, and less than half as wide.

The *Live Oak*, or *Quercus vivens*, is a kind whose wood is very highly esteemed in the United States for ship-building. Michaux says that from its great durability, when perfectly seasoned, it is almost exclusively employed for the upper part of the frame; and that to compensate its excessive weight, it is joined to the red cedar, which is extremely light and equally lasting. In the southern states, the live oak is used for the naves and felloes of heavy wheels, and for screws and cogs of mill-wheels: for all which purposes it is far superior to the white oak. The bark is excellent for tanning; but it is so hard and thin, that the quantity supplied is insufficient. From the acorns, which, though not sweet, are edible, the Indians extract an oil which they use in cookery.

The *Cork Oak*, or *Quercus Liber*, yields to us a substance so remarkable that no other, either of vegetable, animal, or mineral produce, has been found to equal it for the particular purposes to which it is applied. This substance, *cork*, and the mode of procuring it by peeling off the bark of the cork-trees in Spain, have been already described in our No. 460, and need not therefore engage our attention here.

[To be continued.]